R&R

REASON & REVELATION

A Monthly Journal of Christian Evidences

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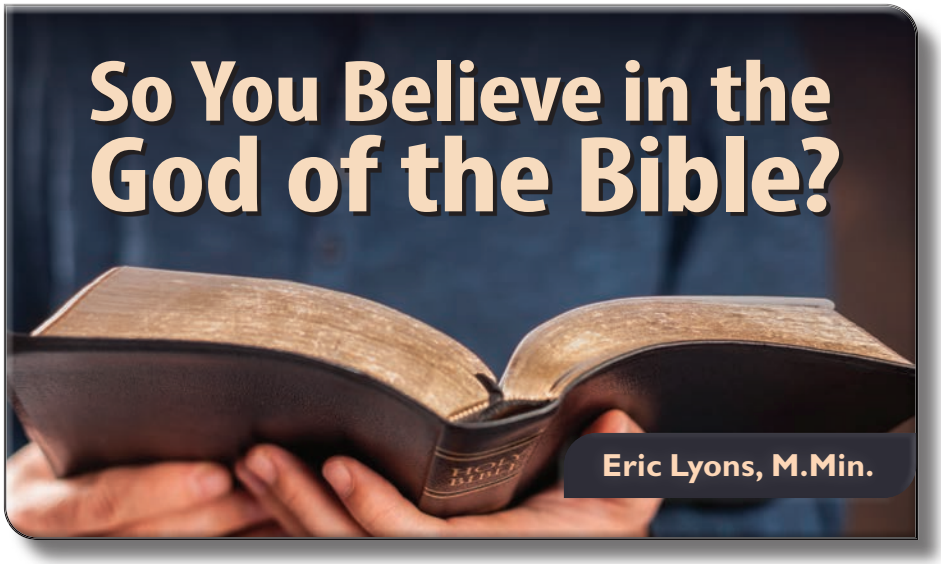
Do You *REALLY* Believe in God?

Why the Apocrypha are EXCLUDED

Discovery:
Scripture and Science Magazine for Kids

"That's Just Your Interpretation"

So You Believe in the God of the Bible?



Eric Lyons, M.Min.

Article In Brief... GOD

Christian apologetics is not a mere mental exercise that concludes with a period at the end of an argument. If, at the end of the day, all we've done is reasoned our way into logical thought, we have failed. If God exists and the Bible is His revealed will to humanity, the ultimate logical human response is genuine belief—not a shallow, mere acknowledgment of God's existence,[1] but a total commitment to the Creator. Such faith is (or should be) the natural result of concluding "there...is...a...God."

IF God exists (that is, if there really is an eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, all-just, and perfectly pure Creator[2]), coming to a knowledge of this one truth is *by far* the greatest truth that a human being could ever or will ever acknowledge and contemplate.[3] Self-awareness is important, but becoming aware of the One who gave us self-awareness is infinitely more important. An isolated Tarzan-type person learning for the first time about the existence of other humans is a gripping and emotional thought. Still, such a revelation pales in comparison to learning of the existence of Deity. Many seem to think that finding proof for an extraterrestrial would be the most significant revelation ever. Yet, such a theoretical alien would still demand an ultimate Creator. In short, a person never has and never will think of a bigger, better, more awesome, and more humbling thought than G-O-D.

Although atheistic evolution says that everything in the natural realm came from nothing, that self-replicating life in nature came from non-life, that complex, functional design in the natural realm came about without an ultimate designer, and that human intelligence ultimately came from non-intelligence, an honest assessment of the Universe (with its necessary natural laws)[4] reveals otherwise. Matter demands a Maker. Laws demand a Law-Giver. Life demands a Life-Giver. Complex, functional design demands a Designer. Intelligence in the natural realm demands an ultimate, intelligent Creator.

Indeed, the material realm cries out for a Creator, Who, again, is the most extraordinary Being imaginable. In fact, there is no adequate adjective in the human vocabulary to describe how far above every thought, word, and deed that God is (cf. Isaiah 55:8-9). Suffice it to say, the very thought of and belief in God is the pinnacle of all thoughts and beliefs by an immeasurable distance.

If God exists,[5] then it is reasonable to conclude that God (1) could *freely choose* to communicate to His human creation, (2) would have the *ability* (as the omnipotent, omniscient Creator) to communicate to humanity, (3) *would choose* to reveal important information to His human creation if He expected anything from them, and (4) would reasonably *inform* humanity that the message was, indeed, from Him, as well as offer sufficient proof. (That is, a just God would *not* leave it up to mere human guesswork as to whether or not He had ever communicated to humankind about important matters that He expected them to know.) In fact, there is one book in the world that (1) claims divine inspiration hundreds of times, (2) gives sufficient proof to back up those claims,[6] and (3) is the most accessible book in human history—the Bible. Even according to secular sources, the Bible ranks #1 in the most printed documents in world history,[7] with an estimated five to seven billion copies printed since the invention of the printing press in the 15th century,[8] not including the myriad of manuscripts copied by hand prior to the invention of the printing press. What's more, the Bible has been translated into hundreds of languages, beginning more than 2,000 years ago. Thus,

God not only gave what He wanted humankind to know in written form, but that revelation became the most accessible book in human history.

THE LOGICAL RESPONSE TO OUR SUPERNATURAL CREATOR

SURELY such a magnificent Maker—Who has created, sustained, and enlightened humankind—should be the focus of our existence. Regardless of our human condition (whether young or old, strong or weak, rich or poor, healthy or sick, etc.), surely the very thought of the God of the Bible would be enough to awaken us to our spiritual senses (rather than simply react in animal-like ways to the fears and fleshly desires of our physical existence). Surely our purpose in living would be wrapped up in *Who* God is and *what* He expects from us.

Supreme reverence for God should be the natural response to Who God is.

If we have carefully contemplated the Creator, it should not take a command from Him for us continually to stand in awe of Him and to serve Him. Supreme reverence for God should be the natural response to *Who God is*. An infinitely intelligent and powerful eternal Being "simply" spoke the Universe into existence. That alone should buckle our knees and melt our hearts. The psalmist sang of God's Creation: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth... For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:6,9). And what is the logical, emotional, and thrilling response to such a powerful Creator? The answer is found between these two creation truths of Psalm 33: "Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him" (33:8).

The patriarch Job suffered like few in human history undoubtedly have ever suffered. He longed for a meeting with God and wanted answers. Yet, when God appeared to Job[9] out of a whirlwind and spoke to him (not about Job's suffering but) about God's mind-boggling created realm (Job 38-41), Job seemingly forgot all about His suffering because of His newly found, *intensified* focus *on Almighty God*.[10] Job reacted to the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe with authentic praise and a penitent spirit:

> Behold, I am insignificant; what can I say in response to You? I put my hand on my mouth... I know that You can do all things, and that no plan is impossible for You... Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I do not know... I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You; therefore I retract, and I repent, sitting on dust and ashes (Job 40:4; 42:2-6, NASB).

Job lost all 10 of his children in one day; he lost his vast wealth in the blink of an eye; and was experiencing immense bodily pain, not to mention suffering with some of the worst "comfort" from friends a person could ever receive. Yet, Job's response to Almighty God was (1) a humble heart and (2) complete admiration for his Maker.[11]

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO GOD?

JOB learned that God is the supreme, sovereign Ruler of the Universe Who is worthy to be trusted and served faithfully *regardless of what we may personally want or what may occur to us in this lifetime*. Yet, even before his supernatural meeting with God, Job displayed a determined faithfulness to the Ruler of the Universe: He declared: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him" (Job 13:15). Indeed, God and His will for our lives is bigger, better, and infinitely more important than what we may personally want for our temporary earthly existence.

In response to God—to Who God is and what He commands at any point in time—Noah built an ark, Abraham left his homeland to dwell in tents in Canaan, and Moses, the son of Pharaoh's daughter, chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:25). While the (likely wealthy) tax collector Matthew was sitting in his office, he heard Jesus say, "Follow Me." "So he left all, rose up,

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and followed Him" (Luke 5:27-28). When Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him, they "immediately" left their boat, their nets, and their family "and followed Him" (Matthew 4:18-22). To use the words of Peter to Jesus, "We have left all and followed You" (Matthew 19:29).

It seems that most people approach God and His Word with the mindset that they will "obey" God and "follow" Jesus, but they will do so as long as God does not demand too much from them. If "following" God is socially acceptable, if "trusting" Him is convenient, if "loving" Him is easy, then "we're all in." Most people don't say these things, but many seem to think and act this way. They allegedly "love" God, but they do so because (at the moment) it is the easy, comfortable thing to do.

A man once asked Jesus, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Jesus said, "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" The man replied to Jesus, saying, "'Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.' Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.' But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions" (Mark 10:17-22).

Regardless of what we may personally want or what may occur to us in this lifetime, Almighty God is worthy of our complete trust.

It appears that this rich, young ruler had most everything in his life in line with God's will—except one thing—his attitude toward money. Jesus, Who knows our thoughts, knew the one thing with which this man had a spiritual problem—an unhealthy relationship with money. Sadly, rather than do *whatever* the Lord required, this man went away sorrowful. He was willing to "do" whatever was relatively easy, but he was unwilling to give his life *completely* over to Christ and do *whatever God* wanted.

What's our response to God? Are we willing to give up anything and everything at the Word of God—the same mighty and majestic Word that created the world? Will we give up lying, laziness, or a love of money? In response to the reality, nature, and revelation of God, will we give up pornography, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, drunkenness, or any other enticing sin that stands between us and eternal life?

In a very real sense, life on Earth is a test.[12] It is a test to see:

- Will we choose to wallow in a world of "me, myself, and I," or will we recognize the majesty of our Maker (and live every day basking in His glory)?
- Will we illogically look to "nothing" for our origins and seek to fulfill fleshly desires like our alleged animal ancestors and relatives,[13] or will we "remember now [our] Creator" and "put away evil from [our] flesh" (Ecclesiastes 12:1; 11:10)?
- Will we be wise in our own *finite* eyes and seek to "direct [our] own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23), or will we acknowledge and trust the Lord's *infinitely* wise ways (Proverbs 3:5-7)?
- Will we wander the broad road of sin that leads to eternal destruction, or will we intentionally walk the more difficult and narrower road that leads to eternal life (Matthew 7:13-14)?
- Will we seek to rule our own lives, or will we acknowledge the sovereignty of God in every area of our lives?
- Will we seek to please and "fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Matthew 10:28), or will we "fear God and keep His commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13)?
- Will we be a slave to sin (that leads to eternal death), or will we serve the Savior (Who gave His life to give us eternal life; John 3:16; Romans 6:15-23)?

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO CHRIST?

IF God exists and the Bible is His revelation to humanity, anything other than a revered, head-over-heels, "crazy"-in-love-with-Christ reaction to Jesus is illogical. He not only created us and sustains us (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17), but He loves us more than anyone else ever has or ever will. And such love has not merely been expressed verbally (John 3:16; 13:34); it has been demonstrated in the most selfless, sacrificial way possible.

Though "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), and though all sinners deserve eternal separation from our perfectly holy God, because of God's perfect love, grace, and mercy, no one has to be lost eternally. God has given us an all-powerful, spiritual lifeline (Romans 1:16). Though "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23; cf. Revelation 2:11), "the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). God "desires all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4). From the moment wretched sin entered the world, God began revealing His answer to the sin problem (Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3). Following thousands of years of promises and prophe-

Christian apologetics is not a mere mental exercise that concludes with a period at the end of an argument.

cies throughout the Old Testament pointing to the ultimate "Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), "God sent forth His son" to redeem the slaves of sin to become children of God (Galatians 4:4-5). "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Indeed, God is so incredibly loving that He not only warned us of the eternal consequences of unforgiven sin (cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10), but even when we succumbed to sin, God left the splendors of heaven to take upon Himself the punishment for our sins so that we could be saved. Jesus "made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:7-8). When we succumbed to sin and were wholly unable to save ourselves from the eternal consequences of such, the perfect Lamb of God "died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8). And, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

"God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17). The Creator of the Universe cares so much for every human being, deeply desiring for every person to be saved from sin and receive eternal life, that He literally came to Earth in human flesh for the purpose of paving the path to heaven (John 14:6). He came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

CONCLUSION

COMPLETE loyalty (however imperfect—1 John 1:5-10) is the only reasonable response to our Creator. Total admiration and submission to our Lord and great Redeemer is our joy and privilege. Like the apostle Paul, who was "appointed for the defense of the gospel," we should seek to grow in our faith that our singular purpose in life is that "Christ will be magnified" in our bodies, "whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:17,20-21). Gain what? And how much? In response to Peter saying, "we have left all and followed You. *Therefore what shall we have?*" Jesus said: "*Everyone* who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, *shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life*" (Matthew 19:27,29).

ENDNOTES

[1] For more information on a saving, biblical faith, see "'Believing' in John 3:16," *Reason & Revelation*, 39[9]:98-101,104-107, September, apologeticspress.org/believing-in-john-316-5723/.

[2] Of everything other than Himself.

[3] Which is why Apologetics Press spends so much time and energy producing material for all ages about the existence of God. See store.apologeticspress.org. See also apologeticspress.org/category/existence-of-god/.

[4] See Jeff Miller (2017), *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), 2nd edition.

[5] See Eric Lyons and Kyle Butt (2014), "7 Reasons to Believe in God," Apologetics Press, apologeticspress.org/7-reasons-to-believe-in-god-5045/. See also Dave Miller, ed. (2017), *Does God Exist?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press) and apologeticspress.org/category/existence-of-god/.

[6] See Kyle Butt (2022), *Is the Bible God's Word?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press). See also Dave Miller (2020), *The Bible Is From God: A Sampling of Proofs* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Kyle Butt and Eric Lyons (2021), *Defending the Bible* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); and apologeticspress.org/category/inspiration-of-the-bible/.

[7] "Printing Books: The 10 Most Printed Documents in History" (2023), www.mvpprint.com.au/printing-the-10-most-printed-documents-in-history/.

[8] "Best-selling Book" (2021), www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/best-selling-book-of-non-fiction.

[9] Something He did not have to do, but chose to do.

[10] Job was already a righteous, faithful follower of God (Job 1:1-5,8; 13:15; 42:7-8), but His understanding, appreciation, and respect for God seems to have increased dramatically after God spoke to him in chapters 38-41.

[11] For a biblical response to pain and suffering in this world, see Dave Miller's excellent book from Apologetics Press titled *Why People Suffer*. You can freely read the online PDF version at apologeticspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Suffering-DM_2022.pdf, or you can order a hardcopy for only $5 at store.apologeticspress.org/collections/books/products/apbkdm0021.

[12] We may wish that this world was not a proving ground for the next, but nothing will change the reality of the situation. God tested Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2-3), He tested Abraham in the land of Moriah (Genesis 22:1ff.), He allowed Job to be tested in the land of Uz (Job 1-2), and He tested the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 20:20). God does not tempt His creation to sin (James 1:13-14), but He does test us "that His fear may be before [us], so that [we] may not sin" (Exodus 20:20).

[13] Cf. Jo Marchant (2008), "We Should Act Like the Animals We Are," *New Scientist*, 200[2678]:44, October 18-24.

THE MESSIAH = GO
So where exactly did Jesu
that Jesus claimed to be t
enough. When the Samar
that Messiah is coming' (
tell us all things.' Jesus sa
her, 'I who speak to you
(John 4:25-26). Just befo
sus' crucifixion, when th
high priest asked Him di
"Are You the Christ, the
the Blessed?" Jesus said
(Mark 14:61-62).
What does claiming to
Messiah have to do wit
being God? Simply that
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"the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6
The Messiah Isaiah wrote about would not only be the "Wonderful Counselor" and "Prince of Peace" (Ruler of a peacefully governed, eternal Kingdom), but He would also be "mighty God" and "everlasting Father" (or Father of eternity)—He is eternal, and He is "Mighty God."
Isaiah also prophesied of the virgin birth of the Messiah, and that His name would be "Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14), which means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23).
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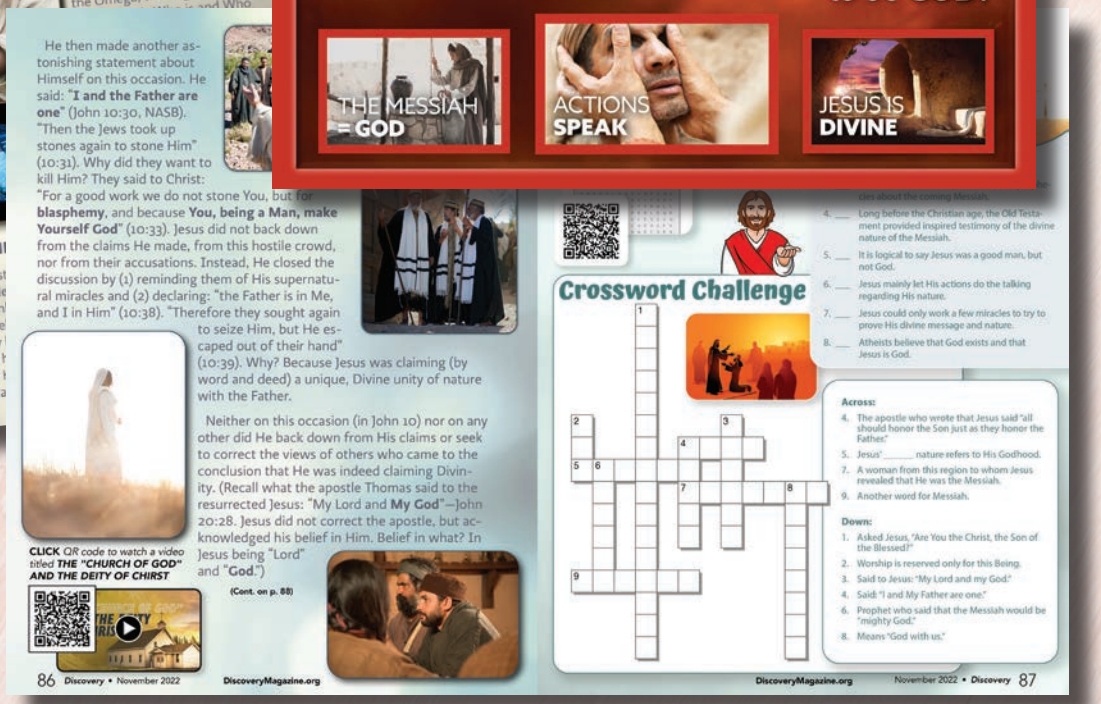
He then made another astonishing statement about Himself on this occasion. He said: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30, NASB). "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him" (10:31). Why did they want to kill Him? They said to Christ: "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God" (10:33). Jesus did not back down from the claims He made, from this hostile crowd, nor from their accusations. Instead, He closed the discussion by (1) reminding them of His supernatural miracles and (2) declaring: "the Father is in Me, and I in Him" (10:38). "Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand" (10:39). Why? Because Jesus was claiming (by word and deed) a unique, Divine unity of nature with the Father.
Neither on this occasion (in John 10) nor on any other did He back down from His claims or seek to correct the views of others who came to the conclusion that He was indeed claiming Divinity. (Recall what the apostle Thomas said to the resurrected Jesus: "My Lord and My God"—John 20:28. Jesus did not correct the apostle, but acknowledged his belief in Him. Belief in what? In Jesus being "Lord" and "God.")
CLICK QR code to watch a video titled THE "CHURCH OF GOD" AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST
(Cont. on p. 88)
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Crossword Challenge
Across:
4. The apostle who wrote that Jesus said "all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father."
5. Jesus' _____ nature refers to His Godhood.
7. A woman from this region to whom Jesus revealed that He was the Messiah.
9. Another word for Messiah.
Down:
1. Asked Jesus, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"
2. Worship is reserved only for this Being.
3. Said to Jesus: "My Lord and my God."
4. Said: "I and My Father are one."
6. Prophet who said that the Messiah would be "mighty God."
8. Means "God with us."
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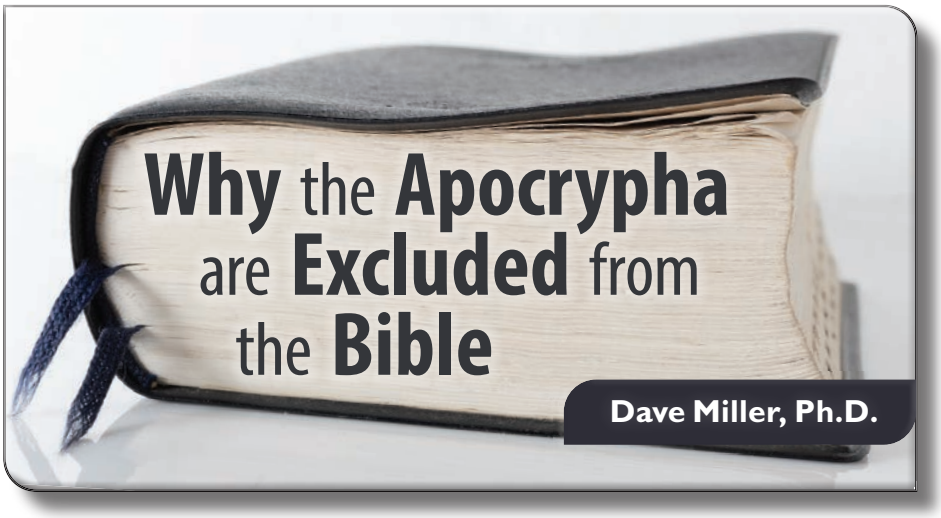

Why the Apocrypha are Excluded from the Bible

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

WHAT ARE THE "APOCRYPHA"?[1]

THE term "apocrypha" comes from two Greek terms, *apo* (from) and *kruptees* (hidden), and is used to refer to books that are of uncertain authorship, obscure origin, and questioned authority. Specifically, the term refers formally to collections of books some have associated with the Old and New Testament.

OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

THE following books are typically classified as the Old Testament apocrypha:

- *Baruch*
- *Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach)*
- *Judith*
- *1 & 2 Maccabees*
- *Tobit*
- 6 chapters added to *Esther*
- *1 & 2 Esdras*
- *The Prayer of Manasseh*
- *The Letter of Jeremiah*
- *Wisdom of Solomon*
- Additions to Daniel:
  - *Susanna*
  - *Bel and the Dragon*
  - *Prayer of Azariah & the Song of the Three Young Men*

Do the Apocrypha Meet the Necessary Criteria for Canonicity?

(1) Neither Jesus nor the Apostles quoted from the apocryphal material. While mere quotation would not establish canonicity, it is difficult to think that the New Testament authors would consider the 14 Old Testament Apocrypha inspired but never quote from them. At least 35 of the Old Testament books are quoted in the New Testament entailing some 275 quotations. Not only are there no direct quotes from the Apocrypha in the New Testament, there are no references to incidents or characters found in the Apocrypha.

(2) Jesus alluded to the Old Testament canon by means of the well-established divisional expressions "the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms,"[2] "the Law and the Prophets,"[3] "Moses and the Prophets,"[4] and the "Law of Moses and the Prophets."[5] These equivalent expressions were intended to encompass the "24" Old Testament books which the Jews early recognized as the only ones received from God, traditionally classified in three categories:

- **Torah (Law)**
  Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- **Nevi'im ("Prophets")**
  "Former Prophets": Joshua, Judges, 1&2 Samuel (one book), 1&2 Kings (one book)
  "Latter Prophets": Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, 12 Minor Prophets (one book)
- **Ketuvim ("Writings"; Greek, "Hagiographa")**
  Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon (Canticles), Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (one book), 1&2 Chronicles (one book)

These 24 books correspond precisely to the 39 books that characterize modern Bibles. Some later Jewish authorities speak of 22 books in the Hebrew Bible by appending Ruth to Judges, and Lamentations to Jeremiah.

The Apocrypha were never included in the Hebrew canon. Not until the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek in the third century B.C. (the Septuagint), were they included. Prominent Jewish figures dismissed the canonicity of the Apocrypha, including Josephus, who firmly rejected them,[6] and Philo, Jewish philosopher from Alexandria (20 B.C.-A.D. 50) who neither quoted nor alluded to the Apocrypha, though he frequently quoted the Old Testament. The Targums (Aramaic paraphrases of Scripture) were not provided for the Apocrypha. Being the guardians of the "oracles of God" (Romans 3:2), it is noteworthy that the Jews did not include or accept the Apocrypha with the 39 Old Testament books (although it was included in the Septuagint many years after the Hebrew canon was clearly defined).

(3) With the arrival of Christianity, early Christian writers and churches rejected the Apocrypha. The early lists of inspired books excluded them. Origen (2nd-3rd century), Athanasius (4th century), and Jerome (4th-5th century) rejected them. Even when included in listings, typically a distinction was made noting that though the Apocrypha were suitable reading material, they were not on a par with Scripture. Roman Catholicism first declared the Apocrypha

as canonical at the Council of Trent in A.D. 1546, an action that passed by a narrow majority, yet, even then, rejected 1 and 2 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh.

(4) The internal marks of inspiration are strikingly absent. The Apocrypha writers, for example, did not actually claim inspiration. They committed historical, geographical, and chronological blunders (e.g., Judith 1:1). They contain some legend and fiction, as well as doctrinal contradictions of Scripture (e.g., Baruch 3:4). Further, they are stylistically inferior to Scripture, and the moral/spiritual level portrayed is beneath the grandeur of Scripture.

(5) The books are dated from the intertestamental period—all written long after the Old Testament books were written and the Old Testament canon closed. Some portions were even written during the Christian era.

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

THE following books are classified as New Testament Apocrypha:

- *Gospel of Peter*
- *Revelation of Peter*
- *Shepherd of Hermas*
- *Epistle of Barnabas*
- *Acts of Paul*
- *1 and 2 Clement*
- *Enoch*
- Et al.

Do the Apocrypha Meet the Necessary Criteria for Canonicity?

(1) To be canonical, a book must not contradict plain doctrines of the New Testament—as the Apocrypha do.

(2) Some were obviously written to support some doctrinal preference.

(3) They deal with frivolous, unimportant, and absurd details.

(4) They contradict history.

(5) They betray evidence of an attempt to imitate New Testament books.

(6) The style is conspicuously unlike the authentic New Testament writings.

(7) They were never acknowledged as genuine by those close to the apostolic age, including Clement of Rome (1st century), Ignatius (1st century), Polycarp (2nd century), and Hermas (2nd century).

(8) Early lists of canonical books exclude them.

(9) Even enemies of Christianity, in attacking the Christian religion, quoted from New Testament books—but not the Apocrypha.

Jude's Allusion to Enoch

"But isn't Jude 14-16 a quotation of the apocryphal book *Enoch* (1:9)?" The Jude passage reads:

> Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.

Enoch 1:9 reads:

> And lo! He comes with ten thousands of [His] holy ones to execute judgment upon them, and He will destroy the ungodly, and will convict all flesh of all that the sinners and ungodly have wrought and ungodly committed against Him.[7]

If Jude actually quotes the apocryphal book of *Enoch*, does it follow that Jude, itself, is an apocryphal book, or that the book of *Enoch* is inspired? Consider two possible explanations for this circumstance. First, perhaps Jude and *Enoch* cite a true saying from the biblical character Enoch that was preserved by oral tradition. After all, not everything that prophets and other inspired men said was divinely preserved in written form. If that be the case, Jude was simply citing oral tradition—not the book of *Enoch*.

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt		
March 3	Leeds, AL	(205) 699-2447
March 8-10	McMinnville, TN	(931) 668-4011
March 21-28	Volcan, Panama	(334) 272-8558
Eric Lyons		
March 1-3	Oklahoma City, OK	(405) 621-5962
March 8-10	Dexter, MO	(573) 624-8906
March 21-28	Volcan, Panama	(334) 272-8558
Dave Miller		
March 4	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
April 12-14	Adrian, MI	(317) 908-7257
Jeff Miller		
March 8-10	Myrtle Beach, SC	(843) 448-8071
March 22-24	Benton, KY	(270) 527-1271
March 26-28	Denver, CO	(303) 986-5800
April 19-21	Odessa, TX	(432) 337-5313

The Apocrypha were never included in the Hebrew canon.

Second, perhaps the most plausible explanation is that Jude did, indeed, cite *Enoch*—but not as Scripture. Rather, he was simply recognizing that what *Enoch* said turned out to be a true statement in view of the ungodly conduct of the false teachers about whom Jude was writing. Jude could regard the words which he cites as invested with some authority without giving indication of what he thought of the rest of the book. He could accept the validity of the particular incident to which he alludes without giving a blanket approval to the divine authenticity of the entire book of *Enoch*.

Writing by inspiration did not rule out or exclude the writer's freedom to use uninspired sources. Rather, the Holy Spirit simply directed the writer in such a fashion that the writer used only information that was true and accurate. Though the inspired writer utilized his own vocabulary, style, educational background, etc. in the writing of Scripture, his efforts were so superintended that the finished product was what God wanted written (2 Peter 2:21). Several passages illustrate this truth:

Luke 1:1-4—Luke was permitted by God to incorporate extra-biblical source materials.

Acts 17:28—Luke first quoted from a work of Epimenides of Crete ("in Him we live and move and have our being"),[8] and then quoted from line five of *Phaenomena* ("we are his offspring")—a poem on astronomy, composed by Aratus of Cilicia (cir. 315–cir. 245 B.C.).[9]

1 Corinthians 15:33 — Paul quoted from the comedy *Thais* by Greek dramatist Menander (342-291) B.C.[10]

Titus 1:12-13 — Paul quoted the pagan poet Epimenides of Crete, and declared: "This testimony is true."[11]

Observe that in each of these cases, the inspired writer is simply alluding to an uninspired writer's remarks that happen to coincide with the truth being expounded. No doubt this technique was intended to facilitate a greater likelihood of receptivity to the inspired message by the audience.

Further evidence that inspired writers were guided by God to make use of other source materials is seen in the following passages:[12]

- Numbers 21:14—Book of the Wars of the Lord
- Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18—Book of Jashar
- 1 Kings 11:41—Book of the Annals of Solomon
- 1 Chronicles 9:1—Book of the Kings of Israel
- 1 Chronicles 29:29—the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet, the records of Gad the seer
- 2 Chronicles 9:29—the records of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, the visions of Iddo the seer
- 2 Chronicles 12:15—the records of Shemaiah the prophet, the records of Iddo the seer
- 2 Chronicles 20:34—the annals of Jehu, the book of the kings of Israel

CONCLUSION

No doubt many of the apocryphal works were prompted by people's curiosity about the voids associated with inspired writ.[13] Consequently, books were produced that would have been intended to answer such questions as: "What occurred in the lives of Bible characters during those phases/periods that are not elaborated upon in the Bible?" and "What occurred during the intertestamental period when the pen of inspiration was silent?" Legion are those who have fixated on a multitude of unrevealed details of inspired history—from what Jesus was like as a toddler to what eventually happened to famous Bible characters. The satiation of human curiosity is on display in the Apocrypha.[14]

ENDNOTES

[1] The material contained in this brief review of the Apocrypha was gathered from a number of useful sources, including: Gleason Archer (1974), *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press), pp. 72-77; F.F. Bruce (1960), *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans); David Ewert (1983), *From Ancient Tablets to Modern Translations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), pp. 73-83; William Henry Green (1899), *General Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon* (London: John Murray), pp. 158ff.,195-200; R. Laird Harris (1977), *Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), pp. 131ff.; M.R. James (1924), *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); Neil Lightfoot (1986), *How We Got the Bible* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press), pp. 68-75; Bruce Metzger (1957), *An Introduction to the Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press); Merrill Unger (1951), *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan); Henry Vedder (1908), "The Rejected Books" in *Our New Testament: How Did We Get It?* (Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society), pp. 207-240; Clyde Woods (no date), "Fact Sheet: Reasons for Rejecting the Apocrypha From the Canon" (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman College); G. Douglas Young's "The Apocrypha" in Carl F.H. Henry, ed. (1972), *Revelation and the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker).

[2] Luke 24:44.

[3] Matthew 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Luke

16:16; Acts 13:15; 24:14; Romans 3:21.
[4] Luke 16:29,31; 24:27; 26:22.
[5] Acts 28:23.
[6] *Against Apion*, I.8.
[7] R.H. Charles (1893), *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press), p. 59.
[8] See the three articles written by J. Rendel Harris in *The Expositor* (ed. W. Robertson Nicoll): "The Cretans Always Liars" (1906), October, 2:305-317; "A Further Note on the Cretans" (1907), April, 3:332-337; "St. Paul and Epimenides" (1912), October, 8:348-353.
[9] G.R. Mair, trans. (1921), *Callimachus and Licophron, Aratus* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons), p. 380.
[10] John Freese (1911), "Menander" in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Cambridge: University Press), 18:109.
[11] See Endnote #8.
[12] See Eric Lyons (2017), "A Flawed Assumption Many Make About Kings and Chronicles," Apologetics Press, https://apologeticspress.org/a-flawed-assumption-many-make-about-kings-and-chronicles-5421/; "Are There Lost Books of the Bible?" (2003), Apologetics Press, https://apologeticspress.org/are-there-lost-books-of-the-bible-66/.
[13] Yet, one of the remarkable proofs of inspiration is the **omissions** of the Bible. See Wayne Jackson (1996), "The Silence of the Scriptures: An Argument for Inspiration," Apologetics Press, https://apologeticspress.org/the-silence-of-the-scriptures-an-argument-for-inspiration-259/.
[14] One is reminded of the Bible class children who were creating their own pictures of that day's Bible lesson. As the teacher walked around the classroom, looking over the shoulders of the students, she asked one little boy: "Johnny, what are you drawing?" Johnny answered: "I'm drawing a picture of God." The teacher reacted: "But Johnny, no one knows what God looks like." Johnny retorted: "They will when I finish my picture."

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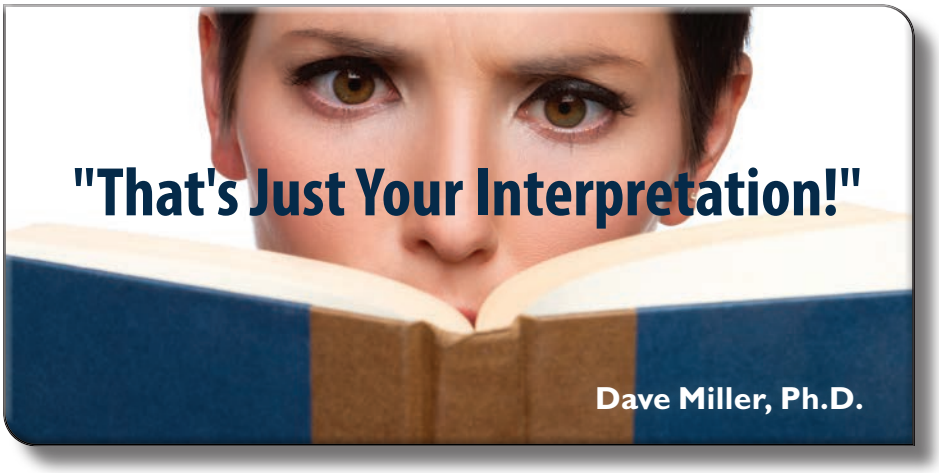

"That's Just Your Interpretation!"

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

WHAT do people mean by the statement, "That's just your interpretation"? They mean: "You've got your view of what the Bible passage means and I've got mine—and who's to say mine's wrong and yours is right?" The matter is further muddled when one considers the fact that on any given religious question, there are knowledgeable, presumably sincere "authorities" on both sides of the issue. But let's think through this notion.

God has given us a written revelation with the understanding that it can be **correctly** comprehended. This means that for every teaching, there is a meaning that God originally intended to convey. It is our task to ascertain the correct interpretation. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth" (John 8:32). Paul said to "speak the same thing... be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). Peter said, "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). And Paul insisted that we are to be involved in "rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15, ESV). When Peter wrote, "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20), he verified the fact that even God's inspired spokesmen did not express their own views, opinions, or interpretations. Rather, they were merely conveying **God's** views.

So there's no such thing as "**my** interpretation" and "**your** interpretation." There's only **God's** meaning, and with proper study and correct reasoning, we **can** arrive at the truth on any subject **that is vital to our spiritual well-being**.[1] Rather than shrug off the conflicting views and positions on various subjects and dismiss religious differences as hopeless, unresolvable, or irreconcilable, we can and must be about the business of studying and searching God's Book (Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21). We must cautiously refrain from misinterpreting and misusing Scripture (2 Corinthians 4:2; 2 Peter 3:16). We must carefully consider all sides of every issue (1 John 4:1; Proverbs 14:15). We must "take heed how we hear" (Luke 8:18), i.e., make certain our hearts are genuinely receptive to the truth (Luke 8:15). We must realize that there are those who are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7). Having given sufficient attention to these important keys to ascertaining God's will, we can be **certain** of our ability to come to the knowledge of the truth that God wants us to know (1 Timothy 2:3-4).

ENDNOTE

[1] There are many things that we cannot know since God has not chosen to reveal them to us. However, we can know those things that God intends for us to know.

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NOTE FROM *The Editor*

Discovery Magazine for Kids

If your 11-year-old son came home from school one day this week and began asking questions about English peppered moths and their role in proving the theory of evolution, how would you respond? What if your 12-year-old granddaughter came home from her middle school science class asking questions about our alleged ape-like ancestors? Could you give her a reasonable answer that she could take back to her teacher and fellow students? And what about the dinosaurs that, according to your children's textbooks, became extinct at least 60 million years before humans ever were around?

Textbooks are often filled with evolutionary teachings. One particular middle school science textbook that I have in my office devotes 20 pages to teaching about our "ape-like ancestors." No less than 15 pages are dedicated to teaching about dinosaurs living millions of years before humans. Also included in this textbook are lessons about the English peppered moth, the evolutionary geologic timetable, and numerous charts and pictures that attempt to illustrate how evolution has "taken place in the Earth's 4.6-billion-year existence."

What are you doing to combat the many things the precious children in your sphere of influence hear that contradict the Bible? What kind of material are you giving kids to counter the destructiveness of the evolutionary theory? I would like to encourage you to consider purchasing *Discovery* magazine for your family (and other families).

Every month, *Discovery* teaches many young people around the country the truth about God's world and God's Word. This magazine is dedicated to teaching the facts about the Bible and science while exposing the many errors children see and hear at school, online, and in print.

Discovery is a colorful, beautifully illustrated, eight-page monthly magazine. Each issue contains faith-building lessons as well as fun activities to reinforce the truths presented in each article. If you are interested in ordering this magazine for your children, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, children from church, or kids in your neighborhood, visit store.apologeticspress.org/collections/subscriptions.

Eric Lyons

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